

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4230

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 05571

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, ASEC, ABLD

SUBJECT: MARINE HOUSE LEASE

REF: BRUSSELS 7267 DECEMBER 14, 1973; REPORTS OF INSPECTION
BYREGIONAL MARINE OFFICER DATE 17 APRIL 1974, 9 SEPT 1974
AND 27 FEBRUARY 1975; MEMORANDUM TO RSOS AND RSS FROM
DIRECTOR A/SY DATED MAY 2, 1974
FOR EUR/EX, A/FBO AND A/SY

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS IN CITED REFERENCES
THIS POST IS NOW ENDEAVORING TO LOCATE A NEW MARINE HOUSE.
AS DESCRIBED BELOW, PRESENT HOUSE IS WANTING IN NUMEROUS
RESPECTS. SINCE THE LEASE EXPIRES IN NOVEMBER 1975, THOUGH
THERE IS AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR 2 YEARS IF WE ACT BY
AUGUST 1975, THIS IS AN OPPORTUNE TIME TO SEEK MORE SUITABLE
QUARTERS.

2. TO SUMMARIZE, THE PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESENT RESIDENCE ARE
AS FOLLOWS: (A) FROM A SECURITY STANDPOINT, THE RESPONSE
TIME OF 20 TO 30 MINUTES TO THE VARIOUS POSTS IS UNSATISFAC-
TORY.

(B) BECAUSE OF A LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, SPECIAL
ARRANGEMENTS HAVE TO BE MADE FOR OFFICIAL CARS TO PICK UP AND
RETURN MARINES AT SHIFT CHANGES. (C) THE MARINE HOUSE DOES NOT
HAVE ENOUGH BEDROOMS TO PROVIDE FOR OUR EXPANDED COMPLEMENT, AND
IT HAS INADEQUATE KITCHEN AND DINING AREAS. (D) THERE ARE
STRAINED RELATIONS WITH MANY NEIGHBORS,(INCLUDING FORMAL
PROTESTS FROM THEBELGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) DUE TO
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EARLY MORNING PT AND THE ODD HOURS AT WHICH SHIFT CHANGES OCCUR.

THE PRESENT MARINE HOUSE IS A SMALL APARTMENT HOUSE WHICH HAS BEEN MODIFIED TO ACCOMMODATE A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE IN COMMUNAL TYPE LIVING, RATHER THAN A SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING INDEPENDENTLY. THIS DESIGN PRECLUDES EFFICIENT USE OF MUCH OF THE AVAILABLE FLOOR SPACE. THE BUILDING HAS COMMON WALLS WITH APARTMENT BUILDINGS ON EITHER SIDE AND IS SEPARATED FROM OPPOSING APARTMENT HOUSE IN FRONT BY A SIDEWALK, APPROXIMATELY 20 FEET WIDE. AT THE REAR THE NEIGHBORS ARE ABOUT THIRTY FEET DISTANT. THE STRAINED RELATIONS MENTIONED ABOVE ARE A DIRECT RESULT OF THE PHYSICAL LOCATION OF THE MARINE HOUSE. THE ARRANGEMENT MAKES ENTERTAINING VERY DIFFICULT OR IMPOSSIBLE. (E) THE COMMON OR RECREATION AREAS ARE INADEQUATE. THEY CONSIST BASICALLY OF A SMALL TWO BEDROOM APARTMENT WITH THE LIVING ROOM SERVING AS THE RECREATION ROOM, ONE OF THE BEDROOMS IS USED AS AN EXERCISE ROOM AND THE OTHER AS A TELEVISION ROOM SUITABLE FOR ABOUT 5 MARINES (F) THE AREA AVAILABLE FOR PHYSICAL TRAINING IS INADEQUATE. DUE TO THE LACK OF PUBLIC PARKS IN THE AREA, ALL RUNNING MUST BE DONE ON CONGESTED CITY STREETS, THUS POSING SAFETY HAZARDS.

3. WILL PROMPTLY ADVISE DEPARTMENT IF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE SPACE CAN BE FOUND.
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